



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **“Irreversible and unpredictable” impacts: New Daly River study**

Environment groups today launched a new scientific report showing how seriously the Daly River catchment and its biodiversity could be affected if further large scale agricultural landclearing is approved by the NT Government.

**The report says that “The development proposals [for the Daly] are the most significant in Australia with regard to their potential impact on biodiversity.”**

Dr Gary Scott, launching the report on behalf of the Environment Centre of the NT (ECNT), said it was the first comprehensive report on the Daly catchment that brought together the best available science on the environmental values of the catchment and the best available science on the likely impact of large scale agricultural development plans.

“Three sub-catchments of the Daly are already over 15% cleared, and one is already over 50% cleared, and the report shows that further large scale clearing is likely to have many serious consequences.

“Further large scale clearing of eucalypt woodland in the Daly will not only kill the wildlife that inhabits that woodland, but also have severe impacts on wildlife, and ecological processes, in adjacent wetlands, rainforests, and the river itself.

“These impacts will be even more severe if the clearing is associated with increased water extraction and the introduction of exotic grasses for cattle pasture.”

The report was commissioned by ECNT and The Wilderness Society (TWS) and written by consultant environmental scientist Simon Kennedy B.App.Sc.(Hons).

The report recommends a 3-5 year moratorium on landclearing approvals for the Daly; that any future land use ensures the maintenance of ecological processes across all land tenures; and that a full assessment of the national and international heritage significance of the Daly catchment be undertaken.

Speaking on behalf of Wilderness Society, Dr Barry Traill said that the NT Government had a great opportunity to learn from the mistakes of southern States and adopt measures like the new Queensland Government ban on landclearing.

"We commend this report to the government and ask that it adopts the recommendations in the report, including an extension of the existing moratorium on landclearing approvals for another 3-5 years to allow more detailed research and biological surveys, and consultation, leading to a comprehensive conservation plan for the Daly."

- The report will be downloadable from the ECNT website at [www.ecnt.org](http://www.ecnt.org)
- Full title of report: "The Daly Report (Part one): an assessment of the conservation values of the Daly River Catchment and the threats posed by landclearing and agricultural development". [Part 2 will address water issues, and will be released shortly].

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